

Void 74

Chapter 74

Damien and Rose were quick to meet, as they both headed to each other the second they finished assimilating their gains. The only one left was Zara.

“You were pretty slow to reach 3rd class, hm?” Rose teased in a condescending tone

She might’ve tried to sound bold, but she was inwardly shocked. The number of threads connecting to Damien had drastically increased, but none of them were connected to people.

She could only see the location of two threads at the moment, but the most obvious one was connected to the sun itself. ‘How can one have a karmic connection to the freaking sun?’

Still, she had no intention to back down.

“I might’ve been slower but it doesn’t mean you can beat me,” Damien replied with a smirk. The two kept walking towards each other without pause.

“Hmm, I don’t know about that one. How about we test that assumption?” Rose replied, still closing the distance.

“Yeah, let’s test that assumption. Let’s see how you run from me this time.” Damien said. At this point, they were already directly in front of each other, with only mere inches separating their faces.

Even as they stared into each other's eyes with bubbling fighting intent, the atmosphere retained its pink color. Suddenly, a cheerful voice filled with innocence resounded in the area.

"Damien!"

The two of them snapped their heads in the direction of the sound. Although this new voice should have had them on alert, it didn't do such a thing in the slightest. In fact, Damien was grinning from ear to ear like a fool.

Out of the woods came a large black wolf whose appearance didn't match her voice in the slightest. Until she began to shrink, that is.

Her towering body slowly became only around 3/4ths the size of Damien's body. Now, with her silky black fur, beautiful angel-like wings, and innocent golden eyes, she truly did look cute.

"You're finally here, Zara. How is it? Are you enjoying the ability to speak?"

Zara rushed forward and pounced on Damien, licking his face like a house pet.

"En! En!" She let out sounds of affirmation as she expressed her joy.

Damien laughed as well, petting her large body as he attempted to calm her down. She only acted like this when she got too excited.

“Sigh, how could Zara forget about me already? I think I’ll really cry,” said Rose with mock disappointment.

It was only then that Zara remembered they had another companion. “Katherine!”

Just like with Damien, Zara pounced on her, but Rose remained unfazed in her acting. “Sob, you only remembered me after I said something. How could you?”

“No, Katherine! I’m sorry!” Zara begged in an innocent voice.

This surprised Damien. Her voice sounded like that of an 18-year-old girl, but her mannerisms and such were still very innocent.

‘Well, it’s not like she has any knowledge. But I figured that from staying with me for so long, she’d have learned a thing or two. Maybe it’s just a beast thing?’ Damien didn’t know.

Rose wanted to tease Zara a bit more, but her plans were halted by a sudden flick on the forehead.

“Alright, look how sad you made her. Stop teasing her now.”

Rose was a little disappointed but still quit her acting, leaving Zara confused.

Damien sighed. “Zara, who knew you’d be so innocent. Well, just remember not to take anything Rose says too seriously.”

Zara tilted her head. Rose? Who was that?

This action made Damien realize that he had never explained Rose's situation to her. Taking a bit of time, the two of them sat Zara down and did some explaining.

To their dismay, this only ended with Zara saying, "Katherine is Rose now!" And dropping the matter altogether.

After conversing for a bit longer, Damien finally got the chance to inspect Zara's gains. Her size which had become even more massive was an obvious indication of her growth, and he wasn't disappointed by what he saw.

The swirling blue and grey mana around her had thickened considerably, indicating both an increase in her power and mana capacity. Not only that, Zara's body seemed to be even tougher than his own currently.

After he congratulated her for this, Damien decided to tell the other two about his plan. He reiterated the story of the fallen god's legacy, and also explained that he felt a sort of calling to the peak of the mountain.

"A calling, huh. To be honest, I've been feeling something similar as well." Rose suddenly said. It was true, even without the indication from her eyes, Rose could feel something at the peak of the mountain beckoning her.

“I don’t know what kind of beast we will have to face at the peak, but if it’s a 4th class, I don’t think we currently stand a chance at defeating it,” Damien said. “That being said, it shouldn’t be a problem for us to injure it if we work together.”

Rose nodded. “If we can hinder its mobility, it should be enough to allow us to enter whatever legacy tomb or structure resides at the peak. That’s all we need at the moment.”

Now that he had their affirmation, he didn’t need to wait any longer.

“Alright, let’s go straight past the second cloud layer and test our newfound power a bit before we continue up the mountain. Zara, how about you show me how fast you’ve gotten?”

Zara nodded excitedly as she once again grew to her original height. “Yeah! I’m super fast now, don’t worry!”

Smiling, Damien grabbed Rose’s hand and teleported onto Zara’s back. “Let’s go then.”

Zara unfurled her wings and vigorously flapped them. It only took a single flap for them to zoom into the air. Damien even had to use his vector control to maintain his and Rose’s place on her back.

“Hahaha!” Damien roared with laughter. Rose was the opposite, clinging to him like he was her last lifeline. The trio rushed up the mountainside and in only a few hours’ time, they breached the second cloud layer.

Even after Zara slowed down, Rose continued to cling to Damien. Whether she was doing this out of remnant fear or just using the excuse to hug him was unknown, but Damien didn’t mind either way.

He even wanted to see if he could get a reaction out of her, wrapping his arm around her waist and pulling her closer. Rose jerked slightly at the sudden action but didn't evade him.

Damien couldn't see her face, so he used his mana sense to cover her. It was then that he noticed she was blushing profusely. 'Definitely worth it.'

He wanted to tease her about it, but figuring that it would result in her pulling away from his embrace, he refrained from doing so.

While this was happening, the trio traveled halfway up the mountain peak. Even if the third layer of the mountain was filled with only 3rd class beasts, there was still a distinction between them.

Everyone in the group could kill early 3rd class beasts alone before they even reached this level, so for them to be challenged, they needed to head to an area with higher level beasts.

Zara landed within the forest that made up the mountain slope and Damien and Rose dismounted. Damien looked at the now visible sky. It was still bright with daylight.

"Okay, let's meet back here when night falls. After that, we'll rest a bit and continue our climb."

The other two nodded and they parted ways.

Damien rushed through the foliage, marveling at the new scenery on this part of the mountain.

Various flowers bloomed and painted the forest in a vast array of colors, the sunlight shone through the foliage of the trees, turning the painting into a mosaic, and many beasts lurked around, giving the painting life. It was truly beautiful.

The trees in this layer were massive, probably to accommodate the huge beasts that resided here. After all, most 3rd class beasts were larger than a normal 2 story building, while Zara was larger than even a 3 or 4 story building.

It'd be quite the comical sight to watch these massive beasts attempt to hide within normally sized trees

He didn't concentrate on this for too long though, as he found his perfect target. It was a large two-headed lion with a mane made of flames.

'Good, let's see how sunfire works against a fire affinity beast.' Beasts had stronger bodies than most humans, so it'd be a good measure of his current prowess.

Damien charged at the lion that had just noticed him, opting for a fully physical brawl before he began experimenting.

Reaching the beast, he let out a straight punch with no added effects. The raw power contained within his muscles burst forth as it met the lion's paw.

Boom!

A small explosion rang out as dirt and grass flew everywhere. The exchange then continued.

The lion was already nearing the limits of 3rd class, so its intelligence was similar to a normal human. Seeing its opponent using solely physical power, its pride wouldn't allow it to fight with its elements.

Fists met claws as the two continued exchanging blows, causing destruction in their wake with every step. The weird thing was, even though the lion's mane was made of fire, it didn't affect the environment in the slightest.

Boom! Boom! Boom!

Damien sent an uppercut directly into the lion's right jaw, causing its two heads to part in a "V" shape. He then evaded the lion's swipe before sending a full-powered punch directly into its chest.

The lion flew back, unable to stabilize itself immediately. Although it didn't take much damage, the force of the punch was still present.

Damien decided he'd had enough playing around. He'd already tested his physical might enough.

Using the time the lion took to regain its bearings, Damien concentrated. He felt the ethereal thread that connected him to the sun. It was a thread that couldn't be severed by any means.

Pouring his mana into this connection, Damien willed a flame to form on his palm. And form it did. The only difference was that this flame was the size of a fist.

The lion immediately sensed the difference. Locking its eyes onto the flame on Damien's palm, it felt true fear. If that thing hit him, it was sure death.

The lion immediately let our fierce flames that billowed in every direction, before it turned and ran. But Damien wouldn't allow that to happen. He teleported directly in front of the lion and flicked the flame onto its body.

There was no scream, no explosion, nothing. The second the flame touched the lion's body, it spread like wildfire and incinerated it. Within only a few seconds, all that was left was ash.

Damien looked at the aftermath with his mouth agape. There was only a single word that came out of his mouth.

"Wow."